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# **Research and Reference Service**

**OVERSEAS REACTION TO THE CUBAN SITUATION**  
(As of 3 p. m.)

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**This is a research report, not a statement of Agency policy**

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OVERSEAS REACTION TO THE CUBAN SITUATION  
(As of 3 p.m., October 28, 1962)

SUMMARY

Khrushchev's dramatic announcement on Sunday was too late for press comment from areas other than Western Europe. The Western European press was elated but cautious over the development. Elsewhere in the world comment continued to reflect a cautious optimism over the possibility of negotiations. Even at this stage, however, some comment from the Middle East and South Asia was giving credit to Khrushchev for contributing the most toward the easing of tension. There can be little doubt that comment beyond Europe will voice its approval of developments, but the awarding of plaudits to either the U.S. or the Soviet Union presumably will differ in the various areas of the world.

The elated but cautious reaction of the Western European press to the Sunday Khrushchev announcement was in marked contrast to the increasing anxiety over the possibility the initial U.S. victory would be followed by a more dangerous showdown.

In Latin American comment there are clear indications that support for the U.S. remains firm and is increasing in public sectors. Cuba, the only place which has reacted to the latest Khrushchev letter, has made its own declaration of terms including a demand for U.S. abandonment of its naval base.

In the Near East and South Asia optimism over the possibility of a negotiated settlement prevailed despite some cautions and anxiety over a possible U.S. invasion of Cuba. In the Arab states -- with the exception of Lebanon -- and India some comment tended to give Khrushchev the most credit toward easing tension and averting war.

Scattered African comment, well behind the latest developments, continued to reflect some relief that a negotiated settlement was possible and that the UN would play a leading role. The basic attitudes in Africa remained consistent with previous indications of official non-alignment and unofficial sympathy and qualified support for the U.S.

Available reaction from the Far East also remains well behind the pace of events. The Japanese press has been showing an increasing

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appreciation of U.S. motives and expressed some fear that Khrushchev's initial "package deal" would complicate UN mediation. Korea called for a "no appeasement" policy by the U.S.

The October 28 letter of Khrushchev gives every indication that future propaganda will make every effort to turn the latest development into a ploy for presenting the Soviet Union as the savior of peace and the U.S. as an aggressive nation.

## WESTERN EUROPE

Elation tempered with caution characterized available West European reaction to Khrushchev's announcement that the Cuba sites would be dismantled. This attitude was in marked contrast with the growing anxiety of the past 48 hours that Kennedy's first-round victory would be followed by an even more dangerous showdown in which the higher stakes would permit fewer concessions.

The West German press, which throughout the crisis had been most insistent that firmness was the only possible policy and that it would bring its rewards, expressed joy at having called the shot. Radio Berlin reported that "the people of Berlin interpret the Kremlin's reaction to Kennedy's continued firm action ... as a clear justification of his attitude." Independent Die Welt, Hamburg, stated that "it was high time that the Soviet advances ran against hard resistance in the West for only in this way can the big catastrophe ... be avoided."

Most German commentators stressed the significance of last week's trial of strength and saw it as a possible turning point in the Cold War. Independent Berliner Morgenpost editorialized that "from one hour to the next, the world has changed... Washington does not merely react to Soviet actions, but it acts." The pro-SPD Telegraf, Berlin, expressed gratification that "for once, a provocation by the Communists has been stopped." It hoped that the unmistakable manner in which this is being accomplished "will force the Communists to realize at last that the world is not prepared to accept their new colonialism, no matter where in the world they may try to establish it." Many papers echoed Mayor Brandt's statement that "the Americans firm attitude on Cuba will make the Soviets more cautious in their plans against the divided city... Kennedy's calculated determination on Cuba will have to be recognized in Moscow as proof of his determination to stand by his guarantees for Berlin." The possibility that an eventual over-all settlement of the Cold War might result from the crisis was also canvassed by German media. A warning note was struck, however, by Der Tagespiegel, Berlin, which stated that Khrushchev may attempt an explosive escape from the dead-end street into which he was led by his own miscalculations."

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The buoyancy of today's German press comment contrasts markedly with the growing anxiety expressed by the West European press prior to Khrushchev's Sunday morning announcement. Then, support for and recognition of Kennedy's first-round victory was hedged in by fears that the Soviet Union would not continue to give way or that a growing war psychosis might prevent the success of U Thant's intercession. Independent Le Monde, Paris, headlined "the quiet diplomacy of U Thant has enjoyed a first measure of success ... but Americans continue to speak of new measures." The paper added, "convinced that Moscow would react only feebly, American public opinion would applaud with both hands a military action." Mass circulation Le Journal du Dimanche, Paris, pointed out that an American plane had been shot down by Cuban air defenses and warned that there is "a risk that the crisis will be renewed." Few papers, however, went so far as the Guardian which spoke of an ominous ring to the words coming from the State and Defense Departments and recommended that the British Government take a new look at its support for the U.S. should the latter invade Cuba. By contrast, Labor Catholic Het Volk, Ghent, lamented Europe's inability to play an independent role when it stated: "Western Europe is being faced with the increased tension in truly humiliating conditions. It doesn't even have the possibility of playing a mediating role. Its security depends entirely on the security of the United States."

## LATIN AMERICA

The media continue their heavy coverage of the crisis over Cuba. Official support of the US is still growing and those public sectors which have lagged in their support are moving closer to the official positions taken by their governments, thereby strengthening the support. Opposition is still ineffective and is meeting stiffer control by local security forces. There have been some anti-Castro demonstrations. In Cuba, Premier Castro refuses to acquiesce to today's US-USSR agreement.

There is growing evidence that the "wave of protests unleashed in Brasil against the blockade ordered by the government of Washington," announced by Radio Havana, is exaggerated. For example, France Presse reports that the dockworkers' plan to boycott the handling of US shipping has been called off. Also clear is the growing trend toward a stiffer official position of support for the US. Radio Tupi reports that President Goulart is embarrassed by the pro-Castro pronouncements of Leonel Brizola and has declared categorically that "the position adopted by Brasil in the OAS does not leave room for any doubt" regarding its intentions. In Argentina the local press carried a statement by one group saying: "The American continent once more is threatened by the Communist challenge. In order to safeguard the freedom of America the United States adopted legitimate defensive measures." And General Aramburu declared in Washington that "the intervention by other American nations in the blockade will prevent the impression that US action is unilateral, and will give this action a truly continental meaning." In Mexico, leaders of some of the independent labor unions have sent a message to President López Mateos condemning Castro as a tyrant, describing the Russian bases in Cuba as a menace to our continent, and declaring that the unions' 30,000 members are rigorously behind the President's decision to back the OAS in neutralizing "the installation of Russian nuclear arms in Cuba." The Foreign Minister of Colombia, in a radio address to his nation, declared that "Colombia opposes intervention [but that] the Cuban government has accepted foreign intervention and this Sino-Soviet action is clearly an intervention aimed at the whole Hemisphere."

Opposition activities in Bolivia are being met with stiff official action; the government has ordered the Army and the police to act "severely against those who try to continue to create disturbances." And a Radio La Cruz del Sur announcer reported that the three prominent capital newspapers "were unanimous in denouncing

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the Communists as the perpetrators of the blood bath in the city of La Paz." Argentine security forces acted effectively to control rioting tendencies in Buenos Aires, and about a hundred anti-Castro youths passed out anti-Fidel leaflets. In Managua, Nicaragua, about 3,000 youths demonstrated in support of President Kennedy's quarantine of Cuba. In Mérida, Mexico, several thousand secondary students demanded and brought about the resignation of the Chief of Public Education because of his pro-Castro activities, declaring "we do not want communism in education."

Following Khrushchev's agreement to US terms today, Castro reverted to his pre-crisis belligerence and declared that he will not consider any guarantees given by President Kennedy in effect unless there is an end to the economic blockade, cessation of the shipping of spies and explosives and other subversive actions against Cuba, cessation of pirate attacks on Cuba originating from US bases, cessation of air and sea violations by units of the United States forces, and withdrawal from Guantánamo Naval Base and return of that territory to Cuba.

## NEAR EAST AND SOUTH ASIA

Optimism continues to prevail in the Near East and South Asia that a negotiated settlement of the Cuban crisis is possible despite continued warnings that the situation has never been more dangerous since World War II. In the Arab states (except Lebanon) and in India, Khrushchev appears to be ahead in the contest of who's doing most to ease the tension and to prevent a war. Fear that the U.S. might invade Cuba is present in the Near Eastern press, including Greek media, but is most stridently expressed in the press of Iraq. Turkey has been insisting forcefully that there is no similarity between itself and Cuba.

With the apparent easing of tension that Near East and South Asian media saw in the exchange of letters between President Kennedy and Mr. Khrushchev and the favorable response to U Thant's appeal, there was an at least temporary drop-off in the volume of comment, especially in South Asia and the Arab World. The Indian press concentrated its attention on its own border problem and Arab media had begun to return to Arab preoccupations, such as the Yemen problem.

Hope for a compromise through U.N. intervention increased, especially in India, Greece, Cyprus and some Arab countries, although the UAR press continued to urge a more active role of mediation on the part of the nonaligned states. At the same time, however, fears were expressed in the Near Eastern press -- and even in U.S. -- supporting Greek papers -- that Americans were preparing to invade Cuba.

Radio Ankara stressed that there is no similarity between Cuba and Turkey and that CENTO is a purely defensive alliance. Turkish media have not vacillated from an essentially militant attitude. The U.S. has been acting responsibly, Ankara's government-oriented Yeni Gun insisted. Americans do not want war, whereas "Russia's basic policy is, without causing an outbreak of world war, to wear out the West by local wars."



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Greek papers doubted that the Soviet Union could wage a war with insufficient food resources ("missiles and space vehicles... are not enough"). Yet it is the method of Soviet imperialism, Ethnikos Kyrix said, to advance against hesitation and to call for negotiations when it meets resistance.

Even before his letter of Sunday, Khrushchev was receiving more credit than was the U.S. for working to ease tension. Soviet restraint was preventing a nuclear war, Egyptian and Syrian media were saying, and the Free Press Journal of Bombay wrote that Russia had been "big enough not to walk into the war trap laid for it by a Cuba scared Washington."

Anti-U.S. demonstrations, often Communist inspired, were reported from Syria and Lebanon, Cyprus and Ceylon.

## FAR EAST

Area reaction, both in straight news and editorial form, is well behind the pace of events. The Japanese press, which has shown a growing appreciation for the motivations behind U.S. policy, termed the Soviet package deal (Cuba-for-Turkey) an "obvious gambit" but expressed the fear it would complicate UN mediation of the problem. The Korean press called for a "no appeasement" policy by the Administration, while a prominent Thai daily opined that Khrushchev had miscalculated the spirit of his American antagonist.

### Coverage

The rapid pace of events over the past 48 hours has caused area media to fall behind in reacting to the latest significant developments. Neither straight news coverage nor editorial comment is thus available vis-a-vis Khrushchev's acceptance of UN-supervised missile site dismantlement, and thus far comment on Khrushchev's now antiquated Turkey-for-Cuba deal is available only from Japan.

### Turkey-for-Cuba

Japan's Sunday morning press featured Khrushchev's package deal, with most papers carrying the full text or detailed summaries along with the Administration's response. Some papers termed the Soviet proposal an "obvious gambit", but expressed the fear that it would only complicate U Thant's already difficult task.

### Disparate Reactions

Comment from the area prior to the announcement of the Soviet package deal was in dissimilar forms. Continued support for a strong, determined, "no appeasement" policy was voiced by the Korean press, while the Japanese press indicated a mounting criticism of the Soviet policy. Chugoku shinbun of Hiroshima, for example, pointed out the contradiction between the Soviet supply of missiles to Cuba and its

professed desire to stop the proliferation of nuclear weapons, and said that the Soviet Union could end the tension by stopping the supply of missiles. Japanese dailies with national circulation, while emphasizing the necessity of UN mediation efforts, similarly attacked the existence of Soviet missiles in Cuba.

Kiattisak, a leading Thai daily, opined for its part that "the risks that Russia is running in the Cuba issue and in the Berlin issue are because Khrushchev has made a wrong speculation. He completely misunderstands the spirit of his antagonist". After noting the strong support of the American people and politicians for President Kennedy, the paper concluded that Khrushchev should "tone down his quarrelsome attitude" in order to avoid a world war.

#### Communist China

No further statement of significance dealing with the Cuban situation is yet available from Peking.

## AFRICA

Scattered and inconclusive African reactions continued to reflect some relief that a negotiated solution was visible and one in which the UN would play a role. With some exceptions, the general pattern of African reaction appeared unchanged: that of official non-alignment -- contributing to factual media treatment of both sides -- combined with non-official sympathy and qualified support for the U.S. position in the crisis.

Leftwing elements in both Senegal and Morocco attacked the U.S. case (October 27) in describing the crisis as an imperialist-socialist struggle between the U.S. and Cuba. As an example of African fears of involvement, both pro-government and opposition papers in Morocco on October 28 suddenly attacked the presence of U.S. bases -- noting that they could bring Cold War reprisals.

## SOVIET UNION

Khrushchev's October 28 letter to President Kennedy, in which he promised to dismantle the Soviet missile bases in Cuba, conceivably reflects the propaganda approach on Cuba which Moscow can now be expected to adopt. Tactical shifts in line, tone and attention on the topic can undoubtedly result as Moscow will continue attempts to overcome her embarrassing position and her culpability.

In the context of probable Soviet propaganda moves, the contents of Khrushchev's latest letter is significant in these respects: 1) The letter's careful wording presents an image of the Soviet Premier as a leader willing to take any necessary actions which would prevent any danger to the cause of world peace. 2) Although he concedes that Cuba possesses "grim weapons," he continues to insist that these are solely defensive means provided Cuba to defend itself from aggression. He says that in view of a threat of a Cuban invasion, the USSR could not remain indifferent to Cuba's plight. Holding that there still are "irresponsible" people intent on invading Cuba, he indicates that the USSR will continue to "grant help" to Cuba. 3) Khrushchev, furthermore, notes U.S. flights over Cuba and underlines his concern for the Soviet people stationed there. He follows this with the suggestion that a "violation of Cuban airspace by American aircraft may also have dangerous consequences." Concluding, he maintains that the USSR values peace, but that it will not allow itself to be provoked.

At the moment, one of the first relaxing notes in the Cuban crisis is Moscow's lifting of the ban on travel by Western diplomats in Moscow.